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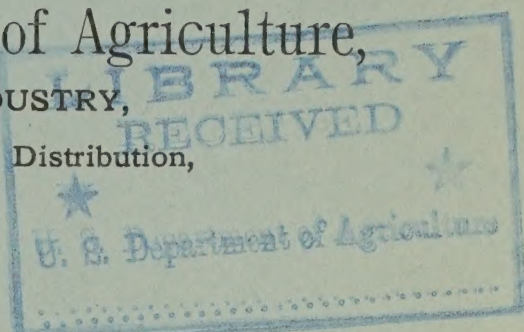
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United States Department of Agriculture,

BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,

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CANADA BLUEGRASS (*Poa compressa*).

Canada bluegrass (*Poa compressa*) is a hardy perennial grass producing an abundance of creeping rootstocks by which it forms a close turf. It rarely attains a height of more than 24 inches, usually growing from 6 to 8 inches high. It is dark blue in color and resembles Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), to which it is related. The characteristics readily distinguishing this grass from the latter are its flat stems and close, narrow panicles.

Canada bluegrass was introduced from Europe and is now found commonly throughout almost the entire Kentucky bluegrass region, especially in the New England States, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio. In the Dominion of Canada it is very important, especially in the southern part of Ontario in the region bordering on Lake Erie. In this section large quantities of seed are produced and exported to the United States. Under most conditions there is no doubt that Canada bluegrass is decidedly inferior to Kentucky bluegrass. However, it is by no means worthless and is of much more importance than agricultural writers ordinarily attribute to it.

Canada bluegrass will grow on any kind of soil that will support Kentucky bluegrass, and will thrive on some stiff clay and thin gravelly soils where the latter will make but little growth. It is decidedly aggressive, and under conditions that are favorable for Kentucky bluegrass it excludes the latter almost completely. Its value is almost entirely as a pasture grass, since it does not grow to a sufficient height to give a profitable yield of hay. The hay which it produces, however, is of excellent quality and considered by horsemen as much better than timothy, especially for race horses. The hay is very heavy and requires much smaller bulk than does ordinary hay to make a ton. It is said to produce a slightly laxative effect when fed to stock. There is a very small quantity of this grass cut for hay, and it does not yield on an average more than one-half ton per acre.

As a pasture grass Canada bluegrass possesses considerable value. In western New York, where the fattening of cattle for market is an important industry, it is a common opinion among the leading stockmen that good pastures of it are better for this purpose than are pastures of Kentucky bluegrass. These stockmen consider it to be much more nutritious than the latter when grown under conditions such as exist in that section. It is also valuable as a pasture for dairy cows.

For lawns and golf links and similar purposes it can be used to advantage under conditions too dry and otherwise not entirely favorable to Kentucky bluegrass, in mixtures with the latter. It must, however, be kept closely clipped. Reports from the South indicate that it is able to withstand heat to a greater extent than Kentucky bluegrass, and it is likely that it will be more extensively used there, especially for lawns.

The seed of Canada bluegrass is produced quite abundantly and is easily harvested and thrashed. The common method is to cut the grass with a mowing machine at the time when it is in the stage known as the "golden." It is then stacked in the ordinary manner, and when convenient the thrashing is done from the stack or barn, as the case may be. The common thrashing machine is used, special grass-seed riddles being sometimes employed. The hay from which the seed has been thrashed is said to be as good feed as before. With respect to harvesting the seed, Canada bluegrass is much easier to handle than Kentucky bluegrass, as it does not require the use of strippers.

Notwithstanding the good qualities of Canada bluegrass, it is nevertheless a pest in many localities on account of its aggressiveness on cultivated land. It also has a tendency to crowd out better grasses in some sections. To keep this grass in subjection where it is troublesome it is necessary to plow the ground thoroughly and turn the sod completely. The turning of the sod completely smothers the grass, and when it is disked shortly after plowing very little appears in the following crop. In sections where it is now grown it is not seeded for meadow or pasture, as it comes in naturally.

Whether Canada bluegrass possesses value or not, the practice of importing seed from Canada and selling it in this country for Kentucky bluegrass is not justifiable. This is done to a great extent because the seed of the former is much cheaper than that of the latter. In a great majority of cases in which Kentucky bluegrass seed is used in this country the Kentucky bluegrass is superior to the Canada bluegrass. The deception of substituting Canada bluegrass for Kentucky bluegrass is easily practiced on account of the similarity of the seeds.

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